116, 554, 784

"Milligan (Papers, Roy. Soc. Tas. III. p. 281) says: 'It was a settled custom in every tribe, upon the death of any individual, most scrupulously to abstain ever after from mentioning the name of the deceased--a rule, the infraction of which would, they considered, be followed by some dire calamities: they therefore used great circumlocution in referring to a dead person, so as to avoid pronunciation of the name--if, for instance, William and Mary, man and wife, were both deceased, and Lucy, the deceased sister of William, had been married to Isaac, also dead, whose son Jemmy still survived, and they wished to speak of Mary, they would say, "The wife of the brother of Jemmy's father's wife," and so on.' Calder (Journ.) observes that 'they never spoke of the dead, nor ever again mentioned their names.' Braim likewise states (II. p. 267), 'Nothing could offend an aborigine so much as to speak of, or inquire about, his dead friends or relations.' We have further the testimony of Dove (I. pp. 253-254), who, after referring to this curious 'fear of pronouncing the name by which a deceased friend was known, as if his shade might be thus offended,' goes on to say: 'Nothing is more offensive to them than a departure from the rule which they have prescribed to themselves on this point, by the white people with whom they may be drawn into converse. To introduce, for any purpose whatever, the name of any one of their deceased relatives, calls up at once a frown of horror and indignation.' It would appear from the following incident, recorded by Backhouse (p. 93), that this strange avoidance of the pronunciation of names extended

to those of the living absent, as well as the dead; for he tells us that, 'When on the island one of the women threw some sticks at J. Thornloe, on his mentioning her son, who is at school at Newtown. The mention of an absent relative is considered offensive by them, and especially if deceased.' What particular fear or superstition was involved in this practice we have no evidence to show."